The Seed Sower.

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Hymn.

Father, we our dreams are dreaming,
Thou art the Eternal Truth:
Year by year the shadowy seeming
Creeps upon us from our youth.

Touch our eyes with heavenly healing;
Take the obscuring scales away:
That no more we grope by feeling,
But walk bravely in the day.

Life as Thou behold'st it, seeing
All its beauty and its worth;
Sin with Thine abhorrence fleeing,
Finding Heaven in midst of earth.

Even now, when foes surrounding,
Block our path with pointed spear,
May we see Thy host surrounding,
And their battle pæan hear.

Stir in us the pulse of daring,
Wake the old heroic fires,
That with Christ Love's conflict sharing,
We be worthy of our sires.

Hail, ye saints in warfare glorious!
Hail, great Leader, girt with might!
Hail, allies unseen, victorious!
Hail our life-long earthly fight!

ADDISON A. CHARLESWORTH.

The Christian Minister.

A SERMON PREACHED BY
H. HAROLD JOHNSON,
the first Sunday of his ministry at Small Heath, September 12, 1897.

JOHN x., 10.—"*I have come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.*"

I have read to you that wonderful chapter, the fourth of St. Luke, which describes so vividly and lovingly the opening of the ministry of Jesus. And I have also read to you the beautiful passage which Jesus read from a roll of the great prophet of the Captivity, when he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day from which the Evangelist dates his ministry.

The fourth chapter of St. Luke is a drama of life, and it has the unity and living scenes of a drama—the life of a teacher of men, *any* teacher, of a minister, a servant, a helper, a healer, a saviour, a life-giver, a creator. The dim background of the past is faintly, yet effectively suggested—the years of preparation, the small opportunities, faithfully seized, leading slowly,

but surely, to great ones. "Is not this Joseph's son?"—the carpenter's? "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" And yet, though "no prophet is acceptable in his own country"—so runs the old proverb—"a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about," and when he read from the roll in his own village of Nazareth "the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him," and they "wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth." A poor start was it not? Only a carpenter's son in a despised village-town! Greatness enough is it not to draw *all* men unto you? To be poor, yet make many rich; to be meek, yet inherit the earth; to have nothing, yet possess all things; to be fools with the wisdom of God? Jesus did not have much schooling, yet, I fancy, he *understood* the prophets and the psalms far better than the scribes; I mean he got at the poetry of them, the essence, the life, the kernel, while they laboriously crunched the husk. Their motto was *meat*, and his motto was *life*. The life is more than the meat. Had one of those said dry-as-dust scribes, hair-splitters and learned in the law, stood up in the synagogue of Nazareth for to read, think you that the eyes of all in the synagogue would have been fastened on him; and when he passed from the lessons to the sermon think you that all would have wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth?

How was it, I wonder? What *was* that subtle, penetrating *something* in Jesus which made him speak with authority and draw *all* men unto him? What *is* that "touch of nature," or genius, which "makes the whole world kin?" How comes it? The instantaneous something in that picture, or poem, or music, its atmosphere, the whole effect, the real creative part revealing the individual and the mood, indifferent of detail and technique, the unsought soul of the picture, or poem, or music—the touch, how comes it? A note or two played and the slumbering soul is waked. A few words spoken and you thrill to them. A line or two of poetry and the deepest chords of being are struck. One look at a man or woman, and you *love* that man or woman—you are his or hers *for ever*. How is it?

Do you know, friend, what this *something* is? It is God. When *we* speak with authority, when *we* draw *all* men unto us, when soul responds to soul, and soul speaks to soul in spirit speech, it is not *we* that speak but the spirit of our Father that dwelleth in us. "The word *of the Lord* came unto me, saying," and I spake. "The spirit *of the Lord* was upon me," and I went. There are not *many* creators, but *one* creator. The artist, the poet, the musician, the saviour, who bring fresh worlds of beauty and wonder to light, opening blind eyes and deaf ears to the realms of the unseen and of silence, share in the very being of God. Their creation, their life, is God's creation, God's life.

"I have come that ye might have *life*, and that ye might have it more abundantly," said Jesus. Come and share with me in the life of God. "I and my Father are one," and so may you and the Father be one. My soul is so attuned to my Father's will and so throbs with harmony it cannot but ring true; ring out true with me!

Jesus grew as all things in nature grow—he only gained *life* by *living*. He trod the same path every teacher, or saviour, treads.

How wonderfully the "*storm and stress*" period of his life is symbolised in the Evangelist's story of the "Temptation!" He learned the lesson that "man shall not live by bread alone," and it was only natural that often he should eat nothing in those days. Do we not still associate a garret with the life of the poet and artist and reformer? And when he hungered the devil naturally came to him, and said, "Haven't you had enough of this "storm and stress," this wild unrest, hadn't you, after all, better settle down like the rest of men, stick to your carpentering, get a comfortable living (I like that word!), marry a wife, and live respectably at home? And, doubtless, at times, when Jesus was not sure of his way, and even doubted of himself and his mission, and dull despair gnawed at his heart, crying, "Cease, cease, poor fool, it is not worth its cost," doubtless, at times, the temptation was strong. In the prayer he would have us pray, the prayer he prayed, one of the petitions is "Lead us not into temptation." Ah, how often he must have prayed this! *Jesus gave up Home Comforts.*

And then, when he had victoriously battled with this temptation, and felt himself *through the conquest* a leader of men, the devil came to him again. Should he not rescue his nation

from the dominion of the Romans, and emulate David of old with whom they liked to associate him? Were not the people expecting a warlike victorious Messiah-prince, and was not he their Messiah? Which should he be, a Judas Maccabœus, a "Solomon in all his glory"—or, "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Which was it to be, "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," or, "not a place to lay his head" and the inheritance of the meek? *Jesus gave up Politics.*

And then, when his life was fuller *through his conquests*, and he began to draw *all* men unto him, the devil came to him again, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, where all the city could see him. A little charlatanry mixed in with his teaching, a few crocodile tears, an insincerity and unreality or two, a little bowing to custom and stooping to conventionality, a few unpleasant words, "viper" and "hypocrite," weeded out of his vocabulary, some slight compromise here and there, a little flattery, a clever trick or two for gapers and swallowers, and he would have been the talk of the town and of dupes, and not the crucified of Calvary. *All* men would have spoken well of him. I wonder if this problem ever presented itself to Mahomet? *Jesus gave up popularity.*

Goethe's Wagner, the pedant, the feeble, but would-be swayer of populaces, puts the problem to Faust:—

"For oft," **he says**, "I've heard it said, as teacher
A comedian may instruct and form a preacher."
"True," **says Faust**, "if the preacher the comedian play,
As that, at times, right well the case may be."

And he goes on:

"Seek you but what is honest gain,
And be no tinkling fool confessed;
Reason, with good sense in its train,
With little art can be expressed;
And if you've really ought to say,
What need for words to hunt and stray?
Yes, your discourses, with their sparkling glow,
In which you us your little nothings twist,
Are unrefreshing as the winds that blow
In Autumn through dead rustling leaves the mist."

The "tinkling fools," with their "sparkling glow" and "little nothings,"—alas, for poor humanity!—are often great men to-day, at least so the world calls them. Ah me! can there be any sadder sight than to see men led by men who believe not in men? Alas for poor humanity and unrefreshed souls that ask for bread and gladly receive a stone! Having eyes they see not, and having ears they hear not, neither do they understand. Jesus did not cater for the mob, nor speak to the gallery—he took his stand on more solid, more democratic ground than that—on the common heart of man. Jesus gave up popularity. There are many shoals and reefs and fatal rocks on the voyage to the teaching and leadership of men—few steer clear of the Siren popularity. How profound a lesson underlies the words "Beware, when *all* men speak well of you!" Only one or two great men in the history of humanity have fully realized this.

Thus, then, is prefigured to us in this wonderful scene of the "Temptation," in this wonderful drama, the fourth chapter of St. Luke, how Jesus grew, how it was *he* became the ideal minister, how it was *he* shared so richly in the life of God, and could give *life* as none before or since. We only have here scant detail and bold lines, but we get the keynote of the life—a few vivid masterly touches, and motive and effect are there—*self-sacrifice*, the giving up of *everything*, even father and mother, and wife, and home, and land, and fame, and *life*, if need be, if the keeping of them strike *any* discord in the harmony between him and his Father. We even get a glimpse in this chapter of the final consummation of the tragedy. The very people who had just been wondering at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth, like those who gave him a triumphal procession into Jerusalem, as soon as he wounded their prejudices and national susceptibilities, were "all filled with wroth and rose up and cast him forth out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong."

This self-sacrifice—what Fishin' Jimmy called, "the sufferin', givin' up, and dyin' part"—makes the unity of the life, the drama. All inevitably follows along this line—till life itself is given up and the curtain falls. *Life* is only gained through temptation and sacrifice, through the conflict incessantly waged between desire and duty, and the unhesitating sacrifice of desire for duty. Then only, at length, after many years, does *life* come and desire and duty blend.

This is what speaks to me in this wonderful chapter. This is, it seems to me, the essence,

the kernel, the atmosphere, the motive, the touch, the subtle penetrating something, the life secret I want—self-sacrifice. It is here unpremeditated, unsought; it is art; it is nature; it is *life.*

There were other influences in that dim background that went to fortify the main motive, to purify the vision, to bring the Father nearer and nearer to the sympathetic soul of Jesus, waiting ever for the perfect harmony. The early home in Nazareth, the father and mother, and brothers and sisters, the hills he walked on, the lake, the fishers, the friends, the enemies, the wisdom and ignorance of the village, the goodness and the vice, the laughter and the tears, the merry-makings and the days of mourning, the birds, the flowers, nature in all her moods, the occupations, the school—"these became part of the child"—and, later, his trade and the rising problems, visits to Jerusalem, days in the wilderness, probings of mysteries, experimentings, ideals, unrest, at times seeing God face to face, and, at times, night and no vision—and at length the "one thing needful," love, "others' needs," (the Norwich pulpit, where I have been lately ministering, has this motto inscribed upon it), *and then the Great Renunciation,* and then salvation—peace, joy and eternal life. I and my Father are one. The kingdom of God is within me. *And then,* then only, the real ministry begins.

"After all this, and more," says Whitman, in words far nobler than mine, "only at last, after many years, it is just possible there comes to a man, a woman, the divine power to speak words; then toward that man or that woman swiftly hasten all—none refuse, all attend."

"O, what is it in me," he goes on, "that makes me tremble so at voices?" Surely whoever speaks to me in the right voice, him or her I shall follow, as the water follows the moon, silently, with fluid steps anywhere around the globe. All waits for the right voices; every word uttered then has deeper, sweeter, new sounds, impossible on less terms."

That is why, when Jesus stood up in the synagogue for to read on the Sabbath day of the beginning of his ministry, "the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him." He had the right voice. He had that subtle, penetrating, irresistible, compelling *something*—the "power of God unto salvation."

They needed not to have said to him "Physician, heal *thyself;*" you can't get balm of Gilead from Sodom. That proverb "No prophet is acceptable in his own country" should have had a flat denial for once.

Jesus went on, however, in spite of opposition. It did not crush him. It never can him who can say, "The spirit *of the Lord* God is upon me," "The *Lord* hath anointed me," "The word *of the Lord* came unto me, saying." He is grounded upon a rock. The rains may descend, and the floods come and the winds blow, but he fears not. Why should he?

It won't all be Gethsemane for him. If he do indeed preach good tidings to the poor, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, proclaim the year of the Lord's good pleasure, comfort all that mourn, give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness—who shall tell his joy?

If men build, through his teaching and example, the old wastes, and raise up the former desolations; if, one day, they, too, shall be called priests of the Lord, a holy people, the seed which the Lord hath blessed; then shall he greatly rejoice in the Lord, his soul shall be joyful in his God.

But, come weal or woe, for Zion's sake he will not hold his peace, and for Jerusalem's sake he will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. He shall not keep silence, he shall never hold his peace day nor night till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth, and the words on his lips shall be "Behold thy salvation cometh."

Such was the reward of Jesus.

Fear nothing, blame nothing, flee nothing—so much as thy vices and thy sins.—*Thomas A'Kempis.*

Keep close to duty. Never mind the future, if only you have peace of conscience. Be what you ought to be: the rest is God's affair. Supposing that there were no good and holy God, nothing but universal being, the law of the all, duty would still be the key of the enigma, the pole-star of a wandering humanity. —*Amiel.*

More about the Pronoun "I."

What an indication of character is furnished by the use of "I." Note how a man betrays himself by its frequent employment in speech, by the manner of its use, the obtrusion of his own opinion, clenching everything by reference to his little experience, repeating everlastingly his miserable pretentious "I," till the hearer grows tired and sick of it. Some men emphasise the "I," and contrive to throw a world of meaning into the utterance, you see that self-conceit fills up their lives and rounds their every phrase and action; they live in an atmosphere of self-assertion and self-praise. In writing, again, how commonly the distinctive pronoun starts out. Even those who know that the constant use of it is forbidden by good taste, nevertheless fall unconsciously into violation of their own precept. Look at the bundle of your friends' letters and you will find them dotted with "I's." Smile at the weakness of the writers, and then look at your own letters, and you will be startled to find the same thing there. It is much more difficult than people think to avoid a practice that comes natural to us. Try to write a paper on any personal subject without an "I," and you will see how hard it is, and how constantly you must be upon the watch to prevent a slip. Make a speech, and the trial will be harder still. Preach a sermon, and you will find the difficulty increase. Write a long letter, and it becomes hardest of all. There is nothing in the range of spoken or written language so insidious as this pronoun. Even against the keenest watch it *will* get in; indeed, the very trial to keep it out makes unexpected place for its entry, for we often stumble through excess of caution.

As a matter of course, conversation is especially fruitful of the egotism which finds expression in the "I." We think in "I's," and so we speak them by the hundred. They drop out unconsciously in a stream, like the pearls and rubies from the mouth of the princess in the fairy tale. Even the most modest of people seldom say, "What do *you* think?" they begin instead with, "*I* think so-and-so." The commonest phrase in use is that hateful "I told you so?" and it is the most untruthful, too, for the chances are a hundred to one that the speaker never did tell you what he says or thinks he did. It comes of our always thinking of ourselves, and of our liking to have some visible, authoritative, or illustrative connection with whatever has occurred. Whenever something is related of other persons, we are always tempted to break in with anecdotes of our own experiences of the same kind. It would be comical, if it were not so common, to hear people capping an anecdote with the familiar "I said," or "I did," or "I remember" just the same thing. It really seems, for the time, as if the English language had resolved itself into one personal pronoun, and as if everybody was trying to repeat it in chorus.

Public speakers are great sinners in the use of the "I." Frequently—the rule is not absolute—the worst speakers, or those of least consideration, use it most. There is, however, one very notable instance to the contrary. It was said of the late Sir Robert Peel that the printers were hard set to find "I's" enough for the reports of his speeches, he so besprinkled them with his favourite pronoun. Mr. Gladstone was pretty liberal in the same way, and so was Mr. Disraeli; while as to the common run of speakers in Parliament the perpetual "I's" are the chief ornaments of their addresses. Mr. Bright—always pure in style, and *not* always thinking of himself—set an example the other way; he was comparatively sparing in the use of the pronoun. Mr. Cobden was much the same, but he used it with greater frequency than Mr. Bright. In literature there are certain classes of writers who must employ the direct form of writing, but amongst these there is a considerable difference in the number of "I's" they use. The poets are not very prominent in this respect, unless they begin to speak at once to the reader, and then the "I's" come out thickly enough and to spare. Take, for example, Mr. Tennyson's "In Memoriam;" and some of Mr. Browning's minor poems. Mr. Morris, even in the semi-personal connecting links of the stories in his "Earthly Paradise," scarcely ever uses the pronoun. Nor did many of what may be called the "standard" poets resort to it, unless in dedicatory or elegiac verses. Milton, Dryden, and Pope were very free from this kind of personality; there are but few examples in Spenser, and still fewer in Shelley. Though essentially egotistic, Wordsworth uses the pronoun with much greater moderation than some of his imitators; nor is

Byron by any means so fond of it as might be supposed from a hasty glance at his pages. Cowper has been missed in this brief review; but Cowper—most modest of men—*did* begin one of his poems with an unlucky sequence of pronouns—

"*I* sing the sofa. *I*, who lately sang
Truth, Hope, and Charity."

Novelists of these days have fallen into the habit of dropping the thread of their stories, and stopping to moralise, or to gossip with readers, in their own persons. It is a bad practice; not to be commended, though Thackeray adopted it to a considerable extent, and though he had warrant for it, in a lesser degree, in his great master and examplar—Fielding. Diarists and writers of autobiographies are, of course, licensed to use the pronoun "I" on slight provocation, but these differ greatly in their employment of it. Pepys, for instance, loads his pages with "I's," and plainly thinks of everything only as it had reference to himself. Evelyn—though not destitute of proper pride—is graver and more restrained. Of modern diaries two only need be mentioned—Raikes's Journals, and Crabb Robinson's Diary; in neither of these is the pronoun offensively prominent. The memoir writers, who have to speak much of themselves, are, on the whole, worse than the diarists. Take some of them at random,—Benvenuto Cellini, an egotist of the first water, is as full of "I's" as a peacock's tail; and so are Rochefoucauld, De Retz, St. Simon, and others of the Frenchmen, though some of these are singularly reticent of self, as witness Philip de Commines and the Duke of Sully; the latter, indeed, dictated his memoirs in the first person, and then had them turned into the third person, by his secretaries, in order to avoid the appearance of egotism. Modern Frenchmen do not follow this example; two instances may suffice—those of Lamartine, in his "Twenty-five Years of My Life;" and (widely different character) M. Guizot, in his "Court of St. James's," and his "Memoirs of a Minister of State." The humorists and essayists must needs deal very largely in the personal capital. Charles Lamb's skill in avoiding this danger was wonderful. Montaigne, on the other hand, is a great offender. In his essay on "Vanity"—an appropriate place it will be said—he used the pronoun "I" exactly five hundred and twenty-two times. Even he, however, is beaten by Burton, who, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," speaks thus: "The time, place, persons and all circumstances apologise for me, and why may I not then be idle with others—speak my mind freely? If you deny me this liberty, upon these presumptions, I will take it; I say again, I will take it. If any man take exceptions, let him turn the buckle of his girdle, I care not. I owe them nothing, reader; I look for no favour at their hands, I am independent, I fear not. No, I recant, I will not, I care, I fear, I confess my fault, I have overshot myself. I have spoken foolishly, rashly, unadvisedly, and kindly. I have anatomised my own folly." Against this rare specimen put the following passage from the *Spectator*, No. 562. "The gentlemen of Port Royal, who were more eminent for their learning and humility than any in France, banished the way of speaking in the first person out of all their works, as rising from vain glory and conceit. To show their particular aversion to it they branded this form of writing with the name of an Egotism." And to this essay Addison prefixes a motto from the "Eunuchus" of Terence—"*Presens, absens ut sies.*" It will serve for our moral as well as his "Be present as if absent."

The World.

A PLAYGROUND—oft with clouded skies,
That o'er the rosebuds weep,
Where little troubles take the weight
Of sorrows far more deep;
Where loved toys break in tiny hands—
Sad symbols of the time
When hope shall cheat, and joys depart
In Life's swift-passing prime.

A BATTLEFIELD, where forces meet,
And unseen hosts contend,
With truces all so short, they seem
With the wild strife to blend:
Strife that leaves none of us unscathed,
Where'er the mastery be:
But who, till the Great Day, can tell
With whom is victory?

A GRAVEYARD, where on every side
Pale monuments arise,
To show how brief is human life,
How vain is all we prize.
A Graveyard filled by memory,
Where phantoms lightly tread,
But each one points with finger raised
To blue skies overhead.

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

The Lord's Side.

Sleep, coward soul, and take your rest!
True hearts the fight are braving.
North, south, east, west,
Rise plume and crest
Amid the battle waving.

This is no idle tilt of spears,
No tournament of nations;
Its bitter tears
Still drown the years
Of countless generations.

Ten thousand graves beneath our feet
Still echo back the story,
While, fierce and sweet,
Still mix and meet
The shouts of dying glory.

Like some great sea with passion tossed
Th' eternal war is waging,—
Some battles lost,
Some tactics crossed,
But still the conflict raging.

Against the rocks of want and crime,
Like restless billows breaking,
The brave troops climb;
With each new time
More furious onset making.

Back rolls the wave, on sweeps the tide—
No fear these ranks can sever,
While side by side
With weary stride
They struggle on for ever.

The red sun stains the cloud that creeps
Above the red horizon;
The traitor sleeps,
But graveyard heaps
Hide 'neath the flowers he lies on.

Is this a time for little spites,
Or subtle speculations?—
Who scales the heights
While childish knights
Stoop dallying with negations?—

Is this a time for paradox,
Or sentimental vision,
When cruel mocks
Make fast the locks
Of hearts in deep contrition?—

Up, up and learn the battle song!
Go, mingle with the battle.
Struggle and die
Rather than lie
Chewing the cud like cattle!

ANNIE MATHESON.

II.

Religion and Theology.

REV. S. A. STEINTHAL.

Go where you will upon this fair world of ours, wherever man is found you will find evidence of his religious nature. One of the best authorities in Ethnology of modern times (Professor Ratzel) declares that his science knows no absolutely irreligious race of men; it only tells of various degrees of enlightenment in religious conceptions, from dreamy thoughts of superhuman powers and agencies, to the purest and noblest ideas of Christian Theism. This assertion is borne out by every missionary and traveller's report, often describing very debased and degrading superstitions; and if now and then some rare exception is found to this rule, the misconception generally arises from a hasty conclusion drawn from insufficient evidence, or from the unwillingness of the witness to receive as evidence of religious emotion, a belief in sorcery, magic, or witchcraft. Modern research has shown us that among men of prehistoric times there was a belief in life beyond the grave, and the earliest records which we have of awakening civilization show us that mankind always had consecrated places, where deities, more or less exalted, were adored, and rites to cultivate their favour or appease their wrath were celebrated. If it does happen that here and there we find individual men who disclaim all religious sentiment, and deny all belief in Deity, they are but unfortunate beings who like the blind know not the blessedness of light, or are like the deaf to whom sound brings no message, but who never make us think of all mankind as sightless or unable to hear. Religion is above all other things the characteristic feature which distinguishes the human race, by bringing it into communion with what is above it, awakening within the mind the sense of awe and reverence, and, as it grows in purity and nobleness, filling the soul with faith and kindling within the heart the emotion of love. It is the service of the noblest deeds and the most exalted aspirations. Though its earliest manifestations may be rude and barbarous, the fact, that it does make the soul acknowledge something loftier than itself, something to trust and reverence, is the beginning of the advance of man towards

the ideal. Every step onward leads to a nobler conception of man's relation to God, and makes makes life holier and more pure, as the conception of what is pleasing to God loses its primitive coarseness. We can without difficulty trace in history the evidence of this fact, though individual instances occur which shew in great religious leaders from time to time that a position has been attained above the average level of humanity, helping by their manifested sanctity to raise the common standard of mankind. The relation of religion to science, philosophy, and ethics has already been dealt with from this place, and I have been asked to speak to you to-day on its relation to Theology. To many the two words appear as identical, and this identification is the unfortunately too common cause of controversy among those interested in educational matters. The identification of religion and theology has often led to misunderstanding of a serious kind. If we take the exact etymological meaning of the word Theology, it must be rendered as the Science of God, and consequently covers so vast a field, that it would be evidently impossible for any one mind to grasp all that its subject matter comprehends. However earnest a student may be, he cannot hope to cultivate more than some one small plot, but there can be no doubt that his work will be all the more efficient the wider his sympathies are with other branches of his great subject, and the better he understands their relations with the special topic which he makes his own. We naturally in this Western world are peculiarly interested in Christian Theology, as we live under Christian influences and strive with more or less success to become members of the Christian Church, but we cannot thoroughly comprehend Christianity without having studied the many other forms of faith in which the religious sentiment of humanity has found expression. Just think for one moment what this implies. Not only should he have in order to do this to study the religion of Israel, from which Christianity directly springs, but the various forms of Gentile faith which so directly influenced the development of our religion. Greece and Rome with their conceptions of the relation of God to man cannot be overlooked, and how many other ethnic religions are there not which claim our notice, the ancient Aryan faiths of India and Persia, in all their varieties, the religions of China and Japan cannot be overlooked, and comparative Theology forms one vast field of study which no one mind could hope to cultivate to the full. Even the study of Christianity itself, to which most of us are forced to confine ourselves, is so great, that anyone who wishes to do really efficient work has to select some limited area in which to labour. In order to understand accurately what Christianity is, we have to examine its sources. This involves the power, with more or less exactness, to read the Bible in the original tongues, and being able to study the writings of the Fathers of the Church. Not only therefore is a knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin needed, but the student must also acquire the faculty of criticism, to be able to judge the authenticity of the documents he reads and the correctness of the texts he uses. He must also be acquainted with the rules which guide the interpretation of the literature he studies, and to understand what he reads aright he must be acquainted with the history of the peoples amongst whom the books were written, including a knowledge of their antiquities and their manners. But these matters do not suffice, he must study the history of the Christian Church, and of the various sects which have arisen side by side with it, must know the doctrines which have been accepted, their origin and development, the controversies connected with them. I have not quoted all the various subjects which a student of Christian Theology ought to try to master, but I think I shall have done enough to make it clear to every one that religion and Theology are not identical, or that if they are for the majority of mankind their attainment is impossible. And though it is not necessary for a religious man therefore to be a theologian in the sense of having made the science of Theology a study, it is certainly necessary that every one of us should have a definite and certain theory on which our religious life rests. As the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares, "he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." There must be a clear basis of faith in God and of His relation to man, if we are to have a religion which can stand against the temptations of the world and the assaults of materialism and doubt. It would be, it appears to me, a scepticism

of the most dangerous kind, if we were to assert that it is unimportant what men believe about God and His character, and that it is immaterial therefore whether we accept the teaching of this school of Theology or another. We cannot hope to be able to judge of all the steps by which a learned student arrives at his conclusions, but we can judge whether these conclusions accord with our conceptions of righteousness and truth, and whether they minister to the spiritual life, strengthen our faith, deepen our love, or the reverse. Each one, therefore, who desires to be a truly religious man is bound to use the intellectual, moral, and spiritual faculties which he possesses, with the honest desire to arrive at a knowledge of the things of God as fully as he can, assured that because our Heavenly Father has bestowed upon him the power to judge, He will not hold him guiltless, if he allows his talents to lie idle and unused, yet God will not blame him for the results at which he arrives if he has honestly and faithfully exercised his gift to his best ability. No one can examine the religious world and its history without discovering that there are certain phenomena which mark man as emphatically religious and saintly. We see them resisting every temptation to vice and sin, we note their faith in the love and goodness of God, we recognize the self-sacrificing spirit in which they strive to do good to their fellow-creatures, the faithful resignation with which they bear the trials and sorrows of life, the grateful thankfulness with which they receive every blessing the Heavenly Father bestows upon them, the forgiving manner in which they act towards those who injure them, and the high tone which marks their whole life as inspired by and devoted to the Divine Spirit. And these honoured saints we find belonging not to any one section of the innumerable sects into which the Church on earth is divided, but scattered among all, and bearing testimony to the fact that underlying the very varied intellectual forms which religion assumes there is a unity which springs from "the working of one and the self-same spirit," even the Spirit of God Himself, "dividing to every man severally as He will." It would not be a difficult task to enumerate members of the Roman Catholic, or Eastern, of the Anglican, Lutheran, or Nonconformist Churches, every one of whom we should all alike accept as truly exemplifying the various graces of the Christian Faith. If we could call them up before us to bear testimony as to the belief which inspired their lives, each one would confess his belief in the peculiar doctrines of his own church, and would no doubt do so with absolute sincerity. But does not it strike us all that such unity of result must spring from something deeper than the doctrines in which the saints believe, and do we not discover that while each soul must, because it is enshrined in a separate body and is guided by a separate mind, appear in a different form and express itself in varied ways, yet it can be at one in spirit with all the true children of God. Each one has received the same Gospel, each one looks to the same Christ as his leader and example, each one worships the same Father in heaven, and all together prove that while the Theologies they accept differ as they individually differ from each other intellectually, yet in their religion they agree, because it is the essential element that marks how man has been created in the image of God, even the Father of us all. I am not prepared in any way to conclude from my firm faith in the possibility of true saintliness being found in combination with every variety of belief, that it is unimportant what a man does believe, or, in other words, what theological opinions he holds: far from it, I am convinced that the more closely our belief approaches to the truth the more will the life accord with the spirit of All Truth, and that no duty can therefore be more obligatory than that which tells us that we ought to endeavour to discover what is true in things Divine, and to be faithful in adhering to what after careful and conscientious research we do believe to be the truth. But do not let us base our conception of the Church on any uniformity of creed or opinion.

No doubt when we form ourselves into worshipping assemblies, we shall naturally feel ourselves attracted to join in prayer and praise with those who sympathise with us intellectually as well as spiritually; but as the spiritual unity is universal and enduring, and the intellectual form peculiar and changing, we base the Church on that which is universal and enduring, and not on that which is peculiar and changing. Not on creed, but on faith; not on theology, but on religion. Wherever we pursue a different course we limit the free Spirit of

God, and cut ourselves off alike from communion with the saints of the past and the revelation of God in days to come. We recognise, when we arrive at a true sense of the relation of theology to religion, the way in which our present unfortunate divisions may be healed; acknowledging the right of everyone to follow his own intellectual judgment, we hail every loving deed and devout life as manifesting the influence of the Spirit of God, and welcome the ever-increasing number of proofs which time reveals that though there may be many folds there is but one flock, of which Jesus is the Shepherd. We live in a world where men are frail and liable to error and to sin, but we are called to conquer error and overcome sin, and our leader and Master has shown us how we can accomplish this our mission by trustful love to God, by purity of life, and self-sacrificing love of our fellow-men.

Character Lessons.

FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES.

By George H. Young.

LESSON XIII.

REVERENCE.

"Art Thou the Light?
To Thee, then, in the sunshine or the cloud,
Or in my chamber lone or in the crowd,
I lift my sight."

F. E. Abbot.

God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.—*John* iv. 24.

1. What is reverence?

Loving and respecting what is holy.

2. Can you see the difference between goodness and wickedness?

3. What is it?

4. What ought you to think of as the highest?

Those things which are like the best in my mother and in Jesus.

5. Can you appreciate what kind of a man has no reverence, and what sort of character he is?

6. Why do we reverence God?

Because He is full of goodness and love.

7. How can you show your reverence for Him?

By seeking to live the life that is like His.

8. What do you say about profanity?

That it is coarse, vulgar, irreverent and shows ill-breeding.

9. How can you increase your feeling of reverence?

By care regarding my thoughts, words, and deeds.

10. Who have most shown a reverent spirit?

Those who, like Jesus, have manifested God.

11. What reading tends to increase reverence?

The highest poetry, biographies of noble men and women, and the devotional parts of the Bible.

12. What is the highest expression of reverence?

Worship of God, who is Spirit, in spirit and in truth.

13. What is prayer?

The reverential spirit in intense activity.

14. Are you truly reverent?

15. What Biblical characters most displayed reverence?

16. What prose writers in our day are most characterized by this sentiment?

17. What writers of hymns manifest it?

18. If one is not naturally reverent, can he acquire the trait?

19. Are any people utterly devoid of reverence?

20. Read carefully the exquisite volume called "Quiet Hours," and tell which writer most touches the heights in this regard.

21. Also read Rev. W. C. Gannett's "A Year of Miracle," and Dr. Channing's "The Perfect Life," and see how they exhibit reverence.

Recite Ps. ci. 1; cxxi. 1.

To the Teacher.—Seek to increase this sentiment in your charge. Show that irreverence leads to sin; that the lower life among men is largely attributable to lack of appreciation of the higher sentiments. Set high the ideal.

The greatest evils are from within us, and from ourselves, also, we must look for our greatest good; for God is the fountain of it, but reaches it to us by our own hands.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

Philanthropic Allegories.

(No. 1.)

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROVIDING LAME DOGS WITH STILES.

After helping lame dogs over stiles, the next highest form of benevolence is, of course, that of providing them with stiles to be helped over. Inspired with this truth a Society has long existed in our parish. Students of social history are well aware of the lamentable state of the parish before this Society came into being. The spectacle of lame dogs hunting for bones, with ne'er a stile in their paths to make the hunt significant and clothe it with the character of a moral discipline was, to say the least, distressingly frequent. To describe this spectacle as one which cut philanthrophy to the heart is, of course, to show a certain contempt for the etymology of the word; but when we remember that good men are not averse to being called "jolly" dogs, while the best are proud of being considered "knowing" ones, the apparent inconsistency will be pardoned,—the more so as we have avowedly clothed ourselves with an allegorical veil. It was philanthrophy, then, which first detected the evil, mourned over the sufferers, and devised the cure. Peculiarly oppressive to the philanthropic heart was the presence in the world of a vast multitude of individuals with an obvious and special gift for helping lame dogs over stiles, though these same persons were often unable to get over a stile themselves, or, for the matter of that, even to jump over a straw. Not only were lame dogs stileless, but the Helpers were lame-dogless; in consequence of which these latter, born into a world where there was no scope for their talent, wandered forlorn and restive over the face of the earth committing mischief and depredation, of which the robbery of churches was the most frequent form.

After enduring this for a period longer than the utmost measures of history can count, the community, as a result of anxious deliberation, determined that something must be done, and our Society came into being. In its earliest form it consisted of two departments—the Political and the Theological, to which were subsequently added the Medical and Legal—the object being in the first instance to arrange that every dog in civilised communities should find himself confronted, sooner or later, with the four corresponding varieties of stile. The work of the Society naturally branched out into two clearly defined paths: (1) to provide lame dogs with stiles; (2) to help them over the stiles so provided. But it was soon discovered that this arrangement was neither logically complete nor practically efficient. What to do with the dogs that were not lame was a question which naturally suggested itself to thoughtful minds, to which question there came the equally natural reply: "lame them." The Laming Department was accordingly set on foot, and to our own day this remains the most flourishing part of the business. Hence, too, arose the famous three-fold law of philanthropy: Lame your dog, build him a stile, help him over.

Having thus accomplished the triple object of conferring a blessing on lame dogs, removing the odious inequality between the lame and the unlame, and finding an outlet for a world of unused talent, the Society rapidly became an established power. But in the fulness of time events occurred which necessitated a change in its constitution. The Political Department had to be given up in several countries, though it may be freely said at the outset that the desire to re-establish this department is still present with the Society, and will be carried into effect if ever a suitable opportunity occurs. The facts were these. Towards the end of the last century a book was written in France, of which we will venture to translate the title, "How to get over Stiles without Assistance; a Manual for Lame Dogs." This book had great currency among those to whom it was addressed, and within a few weeks after its publication an Œcumenical Council of lame dogs determined to try experiments on the lines suggested by the Manual. The scenes at the stiles became such as to baffle orderly description. The helpers insisted on doing their office, while the dogs were equally determined not to be helped. Hence arose scufflings and growlings such as the world had never known; threats and persuasions, whistlings and snarlings, alarums and excursions, blended to an indistinguishable chaos of sound, broken now and then by a cry of rage and disappointment from the Helpers as some lame dog, escaping from his benefactors, successfully dived under the

bottom rung of the stile and bravely capered out of sight on three independent legs. At the head office of the Society all was confusion, which changed to positive dismay when the news came that the dogs were beginning to bite; the horror reaching its climax when a messenger, hot with haste and half mad with fear, announced that one dog had bitten off the head of his appointed Helper, and he a Royal Personage, just as the latter was bending down to give the unsolicited leg-up. When the committee had recovered from the shock of this news it was realized by all at once that a great mistake had been made. All cried out how much kinder it would have been to the dogs if the Society had drawn their teeth as well as broken their legs. But it was now too late; an impression had been made, and the political department was promptly given up.

Since then the energies of the Society have been thrown more exclusively into the theological department. It was felt that in theology Nature had failed even more signally than in politics to provide lame dogs with means for effectually realizing their lameness, and the most strenuous efforts were made and are still being continued by the Society to supply the defect. The Executive have caused to be drawn a complete ordnance map, on the largest scale, of the entire Valley of Tribulation, on which every smallest footway and bridlepath of the soul, to say nothing of the great trunk roads, are carefully set forth, and wherever there appears to be a particularly easy and open passage, a red mark indicates the opinion of the committee that there a stile ought to be set up. To every such stile a Helper is allotted, who, armed with an iron whip, has orders to lash every lame dog who tries to get through by himself, and, in case of continued recalcitrancy, to cast him into an outer darkness (also specially provided by the Society) there to wail and gnash his teeth. Moreover, to insure the passage of the lame dogs by the routes where the stiles are set up, bones are freely scattered in the vicinity, for which purpose special brigades of bone scatterers are constantly at work. Occasionally some trouble arises from the theft of bones by dogs who have escaped the vigilance of the Laming Department, or from unscrupulous dogs assuming lameness for the purpose of getting them. And recently a very serious problem has been created by the doings of a set of ill-conditioned persons who, with that spurious liberality so common among the emissaries of Satan, go about in the night-time sprinkling the bones with Cayenne pepper and snuff. Otherwise the work goes on merrily and well. No countenance has been given to the proposal to substitute gates for stiles, the Society believing that such a movement would tend to weaken the moral earnestness of the dogs. The Society maintains a rigid right of way at every point, and, while exacting obedience from its servants, and respect from the world at large, believes itself to enjoy the undivided gratitude of all Lame Dogs.

Two Opposing Tendencies.

A consideration of the conflicting and mutually exclusive influences at present at work in our Churches, by the Rev. Edgar I. Fripp, B.A., minister of All Souls' Church, Belfast.*

I.

A Statement of the Case.

A recent correspondence in the *Inquirer*, in reference to the proposed name of our new church at Small Heath, raises a question of far greater importance than appears in the local controversy.

On the 28th August, Mr. T. Grosvenor Lee, the President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, wrote a letter to the *Inquirer*, demanding an assurance that the services at the Small Heath Church should be Unitarian in character before he could, in his official capacity, give his support to the church, or sanction the use of the Association's funds in its behalf. That letter, it seems to me, was unexceptionable. I do not understand how anyone can call in question its justice. Mr. Lee is the responsible head of an Association with a distinctly *Unitarian* basis, and neither he nor the committee of the Association can permit the use of its money for other than *Unitarian* ends without a breach of trust. Mr. Lee, in my opinion, was perfectly right in the course he took. Unless the Small Heath congregation can give the assurance he asks for, that their worship

* It is, perhaps, necessary to say that Mr. Fripp alone is responsible for the statements and opinions expressed in this article.—Ed.

shall be *Anti-Trinitarian* in doctrine, they have no right to the funds of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

But the moment this is conceded, an irregularity of the most dangerous and far-reaching kind comes to light.

Let us consider where we are.

Up and down the United Kingdom are some four hundred Non-Subscribing churches, with *open trusts*. The vast majority of them were founded by Trinitarians, who left the orthodox churches, not so much because they objected to doctrines of orthodoxy, as because they refused to impose their own particular tenets as a condition of church membership. The trust deeds are mostly of the simplest kind, and permit the widest freedom within the limits of religious worship. And, as a consequence of their freedom, the theology of churches has undergone a steady development. It has gradually changed from Trinitarianism to Socinianism and Arianism, from Arianism to the Anti-Trinitarianism of Priestley, from Priestley's Materialism to the Spiritual Unitarianism of Channing, and from Channing's Supernaturalism to the Non-Miraculous Christianity of Dr. Martineau and Stopford Brooke. What the next step may be cannot, of course, be prophesied, but it is at least possible that it may be one of approach to the Liberal Christianity of the broader orthodox teachers. Be this as it may, the churches, as institutions, have never been, and never can be, by the condition of their trusts, Trinitarian, Socinian, Arian, Unitarian, or of any other sectarian name. The minister or committee, who, in the face of an open trust-deed, allows one of these or any other doctrinal name to appear as the title of the church, on the notice board or elsewhere, must be pronounced guilty of nothing less than *a gross act of treachery to the founders*.

For the same reason, no doctrinal association, whether Trinitarian, Socinian, Arian, or Unitarian, can ever become representative of the Non-Subscribing churches without an immoral and, now, illegal breach of principle. No institution with a doctrinal name or constitution, can ever have *ecclesiastical* functions in our churches, can ever have a voice in the management or guidance of them, without either a usurpation of function or a denial of its own fundamental position. Take, for instance, the Trinitarian Bible Society. If that Society had existed when most of the members of our churches were Trinitarians, and if it had gained such favour among them that it was able to influence their choice of minister, to subsidise the income of those of whose theology it approved, to withhold support from a congregation which could not find Trinitarianism in the Bible, to put the name "Trinitarian Christian" on the church boards, to issue a "Trinitarian Pocket Almanack," containing a list of these churches and of their ministers and institutions, and actually to receive the communion plate and other property of these churches, it would have been in absolute defiance of their principle of Non-subscription, and a blow to their freedom which would probably have been mortal. Such an event, however, did not happen, and it would not have happened. Our forefathers were too true to their trusts to permit it. They would have resented such supervision on the part of a doctrinal organisation with all their strength.

Similarly, at the present time, when most of our members are Unitarian, an association, say, "for the promotion of the principles of Unitarian Christianity at home and abroad," however deserving of support in the eyes of most of us on academic grounds, could never be a representative assembly of our churches, nor assume ecclesiastical functions such as those I have specified, without gross and unwarranted interference. And I submit that we should be every bit as false to our principles to allow this as our Trinitarian ancestors would have been if they had permitted a Trinitarian Society to capture them and label them Trinitarian.

Yet, what are the facts?

The facts are these. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, a private institution of individual Unitarians interested in the propagation of Unitarian doctrine, an institution "for the promotion of the principles of Unitarian Christianity at home and abroad," an institution therefore with a distinct sectarian basis, has gained such influence that it is becoming the dominant *ecclesiastical* power among us, and rapidly assuming functions which can only belong to a properly constituted, representative, Non-subscribing assembly. By its wealth it is able to influence the theology directly in most of our Churches. It practically dictates it in about

fifty of them which cannot do without its help, and it influences strongly very many more by its grants to our local church associations. Every minister or congregation that has received its assistance feels more or less committed to Unitarian doctrine.

I am a member of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, a member of its council, and I am indebted to it for help. I warmly support the *doctrinal* work it is doing, and I am grateful for assistance it has rendered to my new church. But what a difficulty I am in? I feel more or less tied. I see this doctrinal association growing every day, and sectarianising more and more our whole Free Church body; and yet it is the only association to which I can look. *There is no other. There is no properly constituted, representative, Free Church Assembly to whom the Small Heath congregation and my own or any other can look for help and guidance.* The sectarian association has a free field. It assumes ecclesiastical functions because there is no Non-subscribing association to take them up. We are at its mercy, and we are doomed more and more to be sectarianised *until the Triennial Conference elects its own free assembly for guidance and assistance in church matters.*

Thus, there are two inconsistent and antagonistic tendencies in our midst. First, there is the old *religious* influence which has come down from our fathers, the influence of generations of men who put religion before theology, who, because they thought theology to be an unfixed, varying, and less important element than the underlying life of piety and love, refused to bind posterity to particular views, men who put worship and prayer above opinions, and the saving of souls above the propagation of doctrinal truth. That is the old influence of our Non-subscribing ancestors and of the best of our teachers from Baxter to Dr. Martineau. On the other hand, there is the *sectarian* influence, which dates from the time of the materialist Priestley, and a convert to Unitarianism who, knowing nothing of our traditions, made his conversion an exchange of one dogmatism for another, Theophilus Lindsey. Until their time there was no such thing among us as *a Unitarian chapel.* Until then, none of our churches existed chiefly or largely to spread *views.* Until then, our churches stood for something higher than the spread of theological knowledge. But since their day, from London as its centre, their sectarianism has developed until quite a number of our churches, in defiance of their trust deeds and best traditions, are labelled "Unitarian," and have degenerated, in name at any rate, to the level of the college class-room. That, indeed, is not a bad level; but it is not the old, high, true level of *prophecy.* Their banner has on it *doctrinal truth* rather than *salvation*, correct thinking rather than conflict with selfishness, injustice, and lust, and the power of the Holy Ghost

And how wide-spread this enfeebling sectarian tendency is, may be proved by a glance at a single book published by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, wherein the writer, the head of a sectarian college, ridicules one of our ministers for refusing to name his place of ministration a "Unitarian Chapel," and calls the open-trust, for which our forefathers sacrificed their livings, and some of them their lives, the "Shibboleth of our modern platforms" ("Heads of English Unitarian History," pp. 130, 126). When there are leaders among us who speak like this it is time to cry, "To your tents, O Israel!"

[*To be continued.*]

The Lame Boy.

Behind the ridge of Primrose Hill,
On summer evenings cool and bright,
Gay crowds of careless urchins fill
The air with sounds of laughter light.

There once I strolled in thoughtful mood,
Delighted busy life to scan,
For seldom sweet is solitude
To one that loves his fellow-man.

A cricket-match! From canvas tent,
That spread bright banners to the day,
With bat in hand and body bent,
A tiny cripple came to play.

'Well hit, well hit! Bob wins the game!'
Soon rose in many a lusty shout,
While flushed and proud, with eager aim
He drove the lazy balls about.

The fielders must have lost their strength;
The bowler bowls with errant eye;
It dawns on little Bob at length
The melancholy reason why.

A moment's pause—and then, all gone
The glory of the ringing cheers;
He drew his little jacket on,
And burst into a storm of tears.

G. W. T.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Johnny and the "Spotted Hoss."

A FAIRY STORY.

When Johnny Bonny sat by the smithy door he fancied that the blacksmith's hammer made a tune, and after he listened for a long time the "bang, bang, bang," seemed to say words :—

"Down, down, diddle, O !
Riding is a riddle, O !"

"I'd like to ride," said Johnny, one day. "Some lads think they could do anything," said the blacksmith; "you coudn't stick on, Master Johnny !" "I could !" Johnny boasted, "If I had a horse I could ride to town." The blacksmith was making the sparks fly out of a piece of iron. Suddenly they began to turn into round sparks of fire, and as they fell on the anvil they jingled, and Johnny saw that every spark was a gold coin. "If you ride to town and come back to me again," the blacksmith said, "you shall have this gold." "All right," said Johnny; "mind, that's a bargain. Give me a horse and I'll soon ride to town." "Wouldn't a nice spotted hoss do for you ?" said the blacksmith. "Oh, yes, better than any other !" said Johnny. "Then," said the blacksmith, "I'll send you one to-night." Now Johnny Bonny knew a good deal about the fairies, because his sister, Mopsyanna, was learning to knit, and she never would do any unless her grandmother told a fairy-tale. Mopsyanna repeated all these tales to her brother, and they had quite made up their minds that the village blacksmith had something to do with the fairies. He was a shrivelled little old man; the oldest people in the village said he had always been old, even when they were young. He could take hold of hot irons without being burnt, and the strokes of the hammer always seemed to say something over and over if one only listened long enough, so Johnny was not surprised, although he was very glad, when the sparks changed into money, and when the blacksmith promised to send him a "spotted hoss." That very night there was a noise in the shed, which stood at some little distance from the house, and where granny kept her cow. "John," she said, "what's that ? Just take the lantern, and go and see what that cow is doing." Johnny went with the lantern, and found in the cow-shed a handsome brown and white horse. The horse was kicking the cow and the cow was horning the horse, so Johnny ran back to the house, and said that he had a beautiful horse from the fairies, and that he was to have a heap of gold to-morrow if he could ride to town. Granny and Mopsyanna could not sleep all night —partly because of Johnny's good fortune, and partly because the cow was snoring very loudly in the kitchen, where she had been put for peace, safe away from the horse. In the morning Johnny rode off in grand style. The hoofs of the horse soon began to beat a sort of tune on the road; they seemed to be saying over and over again :—

"Down, down, diddle, O !
Riding is a riddle, O !"

After a short ride, during which Johnny lost the bridle and held to the animal by the mane, they arrived at cross roads where there was a finger-post. Suddenly the horse sat down and looked at the finger-post, as if he were considering which way he ought to go. Johnny slid down his back and rolled on the road, and when he got up the "spotted hoss" was nowhere to be seen. Now Johnny Bonny was not a boy who gave up when he got into difficulties. He saw a donkey munching the nettles at the other side of the lane. It had no saddle on but he scrambled up on its back and held Neddy tightly round the neck, and said, "Gee up, Neddy; get along ! I shall win my money after all, and outdo the blacksmith. I never promised him wnat I was to ride on, so long as I rode to town." Neddy shook his head and rolled on the road with his four legs kicking in the air. When Johnny got up and brushed the dust off his clothes, he could not see Neldy anywhere. Next a huge dog came by, as if nobody owned him, Johnny got on his back and pushed him along. "Get along, doggie !" he said, "I shall win my money yet, I shall ride to town on something." But the big dog sat down by the ditch, with his tongue out, panting, and his rider slipped from his back down into the water, and set the frogs jumping. His shoes and stockings were all wet, so he took them off, and thought there had been so many accidents that the safest thing he could do would be to ride to town on a stick. There was a very nice stick lying where he had seen the dog last, but the moment he began to ride on the stick it went forward so quickly that he had to run as fast as he could, and hold it hard. In this way, after miles and miles, when he was ready to drop with fatigue, he reached the town, and heard the noise of a blacksmith's forge. The man was singing, while he hammered away :—

"Down, down, diddle, O !
Riding is a riddle, O !
Play on the fiddle, O !
Johnny's got to town."

"That song sounds as if it was about me, master," said Johnny, sitting down on the bench. The blacksmith was curiously like the other one, but he was young—just what the other might have been fifty years before. "That's just the way with you lads," said the blacksmith, holding the hot iron in his hand without seeming to feel it. "You think that you can do anything, and that everybody is thinking about you. Don't you happen to know that there are more Johnny's than you in the world, eh ?" Then he began again to sing while he hammered away :—

"Oh, Johnny was proud when he rode a horse ;
He couldn't stick on, so he's off, of course !
Down, down, diddle, O !
Riding is a riddle, O !
Johnny's in the middle, O !
Twenty miles to town."

"He got on a donkey and said, 'Gee-wo !'
It rolled on the ground, and it wouldn't go.
Down, down, diddle, O !
Riding is a riddle, O !
Johnny's in the middle, O !
Twenty miles to town."

"He got on the biggest of big, big dogs;
It sat down by the ditch, and he went to the frogs.
Down, down, diddle, O!
Riding is a riddle, O!
Johnny's in the middle, O!
Twenty miles to town."

"He got on a rocking-horse, rocking away,
It just went an inch in the whole of the day.
Down, down, diddle, O!
Riding is a riddle, O!
Johnny's in the middle, O!
Twenty miles to town."

"He got on a broomstick, and ran so fast,
That he rode on the broomstick to town at last,
Down, down, diddle, O!
Riding is a riddle, O!
Play on the fiddle, O!
Johnny's got to town."

"Well," said Johnny, "if that song is not about me, I don't know what is." "The conceit of you lads!" cried the blacksmith, "you think nobody ever had a spotted hoss but you. Don't you see, the boy that the song is about a fine rocking-horse, too? Spotted hosses can turn into anything." Now this revealed to Johnny that the fairy steed had changed its form every time he failed to ride it. "Take my advice," said the blacksmith, "and if anybody offers you a spotted hoss again, don't have it, it is not an animal to be depended on." "But I have won a heap of money," the boy said. "The blacksmith at our village said if I would ride to town, and then go back to him, he would give me heaps of gold." "I hope you may find him," said the blacksmith, "sometimes, you know, in our profession,"—he said that very grandly—"when a lad is tiresome, watching us every day, we are glad to send him a distance for a while." This vexed Johnny. "Why do you say hoss?" he said, "Why don't you say horse?" "Because I don't mean horse," said the blacksmith, "a 'spotted hoss' is not exactly a horse, so don't make that mistake again." It was a weary way for Johnny to go home; and, what was worse, he had to go home barefooted, too. When he reached the village he went up and down the street, and could not find the smithy, and the smithy was never in the village after that day. Granny scolded Johnny for losing his shoes and stockings, and—what was harder still—she gave up telling fairy-tales to Mopsyanna, and told about foreign countries and savages instead, till poor Mopsyanna expected to go out some day and meet a savage. "You see," said Granny, "the fairies play tricks so you had better have nothing to do with them, you think you outwit them and they outwit you. You have dropped a stitch, Mopsyanna, and you must pick it up at once; and let us not talk of the fairies."

The Suspected Spy.

I wonder if you little folk
Have ever heard the tale,
Of the little English drummer,
Whom the French scouts did assail?

They took him as a prisoner—
'Twas in Napoleon's days,
When that Emperor was thinking
To set the world ablaze.

A very easy thing to plan,
But difficult to do,
As Wellington made clear to him,
One day, at Waterloo.

Well, now about the captive,
Whom all declared a spy;
They took him to the Emperor,
To plead guilty or deny.

With courage true, the lad replied,
"A drummer-boy am I—
A little English soldier;
I'd scorn to act the spy."

"We soon shall see if this be true,
Fetch in a drum here, to our aid."
A drum was handed to the lad,
"Now beat the charge," Napoleon said.

With head erect, and flashing eye,
The drummer gave the call;
"Now the retreat," the Emperor said,
That did not suit the lad at all.

In firm, but yet respectful tones,
While yet his pulse did beat,
He said, "No, sire; we don't know that—
We English never do retreat."

"Good," said Napoleon, "you are brave,
And truthful, I can see,
I do not think you are a spy,
I therefore set you free!"

K. F. W.

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